11/29/78

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Memorandum to the File

Subject: Meetings Between Department of State Representatives and Members of the Ryan Delegation

I was present at the two final meetings between State representatives and Congressman Ryan and his staff. The first of these meetings held on November 9, 1978 was attended by Jim Scollart of the HIRC staff and Jackie Speier, Legislative Assistant to Cong. Ryan. Representatives of CA, SCS, L/CA and ARA/CAR were also present.

State representatives informed the staffers that Congressman Ryan would have no official status in Guyana and that he would have no right to demand access to the settlement or to individual members. It was emphasized that arrangements would have to be made on a voluntary basis with the Temple and the individuals involved. The staff members were strongly discouraged from attempting to force entry into the settlement.

One or more Department representatives stated that the inclusion of media representatives and relatives in the Ryan party would be viewed with suspicion by the Temple and might impede Ryan's ability to gain access to persons he wished to see. The application of the Privacy Act to records maintained by the Embassy on Temple members was also discussed.

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The second meeting held on November 13, 1978, was attended by Cong. Ryan, Mr. Scollart, Ms. Speier, former Temple members Grace Stoen and Debbie Blakley, and representatives, inter alia, of CA, SCA, and ARA/CAR. Most of the two hour meeting was taken up by Ms. Blakley's account of conditions in Jonestown and the circumstances of her departure from Guyana. Ms. Stoen added some information about the Temple operation in California.

Ms. Blakley described the stern discipline maintained in the camp and the difficulty she experienced in leaving. Blakley stated that there was a squad of guards armed with handguns but, in response to a question, stated that she knew of no instance in which the guards used or threatened to use their weapons. Both Blakley and Stoen recounted several references made by Jones to possibility of multiple suicides. There was no discussion of this possibility in connection with the Ryan visit. In response to a question, Ryan stated that the press was not officially part of his delegation but they had learned of his proposed trip and planned to cover it. Ryan was cautioned not to bring the press to Jonestown.

L/ARA:TFortune:jv
11/28/78 ext. 23082
Shown to - CA/SCS - Richard Belt